CURRENT ANECDOTES

AND ILLUSTRATIVE SHORT STORIES

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Vol. I, No. 4. CLEVELAND, JANUARY, 1900. Cut Gems, Vol. V, No. 4.

ILLUSTRATIONS FROM CURRENT EVENTS.

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MINING FOR EMERALDS.

A well-equipped expedition left London recently to start emerald mining in eastern Egypt. The diamond merchant who is back of the movement got his first idea of getting emeralds from eastern Egypt from the reading of Cleopatra. He noticed that it was said that she was lavish in her bestowal of the emeralds upon those whom she desired to show favor. In pursuing his investigations he found that the Zebara region was unquestionably rich in these precious stones, and he at once took steps to secure a grant of land. For twenty years he has been steadily pursuing this purpose and now his perseverance is rewarded and he expects to obtain great riches through the emeralds that he shall dig from the Zebara mines. The same sort of patient perseverance devoted to digging for jewels in God's word would bring to light gems that would adorn and beautify the soul throughout eternal years. (151)

REMORSE FOR RECKLESSNESS.

The greatest prairie fire ever known in Kansas was recklessly set by an officer of the United States government. One day he and a party of officers from Fort Hayes were returning from a wild turkey hunt in the canyons of the Saline. The wind was blowing a hurricane, and when a stop was made on the wild prairie some ten miles north of Hayes this officer recklessly touched a match to the dry, crisp grass, in order to make a spectacle. When the other officers saw what he was about to do they made a desperate effort to stop him, but the deed had been done and the red flames went reeling across the prairie like a frightened antelope. That fire swept from where it had been started clear across Kansas and into what is now Oklahoma. The streams and roads offered no obstacles to it whatever; it left a trail of ruin across several counties. Thousands of settlers were burned out, losing not only their houses and their feed, but also their horses and cattle. If the man who set that fire had been known to the settlers all the troops on the plains would not have been enough to stay their vengeance. As it was he suffered remorse beyond description. When the officers at Hayes would bring him papers telling of the damage done he would groan in very despair. A great deal of the misery and remorse which men suffer comes from deeds carelessly and recklessly done. We have no right to be careless of our actions. We ought not only to set a watch on our lips, but upon every deed of our lives. (152)

CUTTLE-FISH OPPONENTS.

There is a strange fish caught off the coast of Cornwall, England, which is called the cuttle-fish. It possesses no real mouth, but is in fact a huge sucker. This peculiar fish seems to have only one means of defending itself. The moment it leaves the water it ejects with considerable force a great quantity of deep black, viscous substance which is about the consistency of treacle. Men engaged in wicked businesses that prey upon society often defend themselves in the same way. Let any defender of righteousness or any minister who wishes to warn young men of danger open fire on the liquor saloons, or the gambling hells, and these cuttle-fish foes will begin to throw their vile fluid to frighten him. But if he stands his ground courageously, he will find as the cuttle-fishermen do, that though the fluid is vile smelling it has no power to do real harm. (153)

SPIRITUAL TELEGRAPHY.

Experiments are reported with wireless telegraphy between Chmonix and the Vallot observatory on Mont Blanc; the straight distance is a little over seven miles and the difference in height two miles. The experiments were made every day for ten days during eleven hours with very fair success. All these experiments in wireless telegraphy suggest another kind of telegraphy between the human heart, traveling in the low valleys of earth, and the throne of God in heaven. Neither clouds nor storms can interfere with the exchange of those messages. (154)

THE WEAVERS OF LIFE.

We are all weavers at life's loom, and each of us is weaving into our work many a thread of hope, and fear, and vision that no one knows about but ourselves. If we are to weave beautiful patterns we must keep the imagination clean and let our thoughts dwell on hopeful and lofty themes. Frank Markwood, after studying a collection of beautiful Navajo rugs and blankets, which are the rarest examples of Indian art, sings a most suggestive song of the Indian weaver:

The threads were as the days of life,
  The dark and the brightly fair;
The shuttle blent the peace and strife
  As it slowly swung in the air.
No guide but an untutored mind
  And the wealth of nature's bloom,
As the weaving skeins twine and wind
  In the rude barbaric loom.

Before it sat the sybil brown,
  And guided each shining strand,
The mystic shuttle up and down
  Invoked the spell of her hand.
And with each touch the story grew,
  Tho' it spoke in an unknown tongue
A tale the white man never knew,
  A song that his heart ne'er sung.

The lines were gray as storm pent clouds,
  And red as a battle plain,
Yet white withal as dead man's shroud
  Glowed each swaying, shining skein,
Green as the grass of prairie's sod,
  And black as the soul of night,
Bright as the thunderbolt of God
  That leaps from the heaven's height.

These were the thoughts that mazed and strove
  Into an unknown tongue;
These were the songs the sybil wove
  That never a white man sung.
For her soul is bound to a sphere
  Where the lost years ebb and flow,
Nor logic nor reason can clear
  The art of the Navajo. (155)

HOW A VICTORIA CROSS WAS WON.

General White, who has attracted the attention of the whole world because of the interest centered in his defense of Ladysmith, in South Africa, is known among British officers as "the bravest of the brave." When Lord Ripon was Viceroy, Colonel White was his military secretary. There was to be fighting on the Afghan frontier, and Colonel White asked permission to go to the front. Lord Ripon demurred on the ground that he could not spare so able an adviser. But Colonel White clinched the matter by putting a question. "What," he asked, "will be said if my regiment is cut to pieces, and I am not with it?" Lord Ripon yielded. Colonel White rode almost day and night till he joined his regiment; those who saw his welcome by the men say it was a scene never to be forgotten. It was soon afterward that he won the Victoria Cross. He did so with splendid bravery allied to the finest spirit of leadership. At the end of a heavy march the regiment, about to bivouac, found that the Afghan guns dominated them at close range. Colonel White gave the order to charge. The men were physically unfit; they were utterly worn out, but their commander knew that the effort must be made. He gave the order three times; the men only looked at him helplessly. He gave the order again and rode off alone, trusting to the regiment to follow. He went right up to the guns; the men, seeing him daring so much, were inspirited; they went after their leader with a cheer, swept everything before them, and the guns were taken. We want that kind of spirit among the officers and soldiers of Jesus Christ. To turn the tide toward victory in the great churches we need ministers who will glory in leading their churches in self-sacrifice and devotion for Christ's cause. And we need church members who will follow a heroic leader in the face of any foe. (156)

KEEPING THE FRESHNESS OF ENTHUSIASM.

A spectator at the recent football game between Harvard and Yale says that one of the most inspiring features of the game was the picture of Governor Roosevelt of New York and Governor Roger Walcott of Massachusetts standing side by side and leading the cheering for Harvard. He said it was almost as good as a touchdown to see the fervor with which Governor Roosevelt cheered, waving his hat with an energy that lifted the Harvard stands right to their feet. It is a great thing to keep our freshness of enthusiasm as we grow older. The only way to do it is to enter into our life work with vigor, doing what we have to do promptly and the very best we know how, seeking each day to make it better than the past; hoping to make to-morrow better than to-day. No dead-line can run through a life like that. (157)

THE MODERN SAINT.

The modern idea of sainthood is certainly nearer to Christ than that of the middle ages. The saint which captures the heart of our time is the one who follows the Master in going about to do good. Richard Burton in his "Lyrics of Brotherhood," sings of him some very true and suggestive lines:

No monkish garb he wears, no beads he tells,
  Nor is immured in walls remote from strife.
But from his heart deep mercy ever wells;
  He looks humanely forth on human life.

In place of missals or of altar dreams,
  He cons the passioned book of deeds and days;
Striving to cast the comforting sweet beams
  Of charity on dark and noisome ways.

Not hedged about by sacerdotal rule,
  He yearns to make the world a sunnier clime
To live in; and his mission everywhere
  Is strangely like to Christ's in olden time. (158)

THE BROTHERHOOD OF HEROISH.

In one of the battles in the Transvaal war an English detachment defended an armored train with great gallantry. Among the noted deeds of heroism was that of a crack rifle shot named Caegenhead, who furnished the range at three different points for the crew of the

train and kept firing until his trigger finger was shot away. An old Black Watch veteran named Crow was so conspicuous for his bravery and helpfulness that he so stirred the heart of chivalrous Lieutenant Winston Churchill, that he ran to him amid a hail of bullets and shook hands with him and called him a brave old man. There is a wonderful freemasonry among brave souls that are doing heroic deeds. It often shines out gloriously among those who are doing courageous deeds for Christ. In times of great spiritual energy in the church, when all are deeply moved with one supreme purpose of winning souls to Christ, all differences of rank and social prestige are lost sight of. True brotherhood prevails at such a time and every heroic soul winner rejoices in the courage and bravery of the humblest member, as well as in the success of the most prominent. It is in that spirit that great spiritual victories may be achieved. (159)

LOST NEAR HOME

Last autumn a Kansas farmer was out in his corn field shocking corn and a little four-year-old boy went along for company, as the afternoon was pleasant and the little fellow wanted to "Help papa shock corn." Along toward night he started alone to go to the house which was but a little way off, and that was the last seen of him until about sunrise the next morning. The father finished picking his load of corn and went to the house, supposing the boy was there, but on inquiry found that such was not the case. Search was at once instituted, and the neighbors were called upon to assist, and it wasn't long before the corn-fields were alive with men and lanterns looking for the lost child. To add to the grief of the parents and friends the rain began to pour down in torrents about midnight, but the boy was nowhere to be found. They continued the search in the rain, calling for the little fellow, but hearing no response. The next morning one of the searching party came upon the wee one traveling in one of the neighboring corn-fields, wet through to the skin, and his clothes covered with mud, but was happily still alive. How many there are who are lost near home. There are dangers to childhood and youth within the very sight of the home windows, and parents and teachers need to guard carefully the steps of the little ones that they do not become confused and wander into the darkness. (160)

SAVED BY THE SKIN OF THE TEETH.

A very curious circumstance happened in Connecticut not long ago in a fox hunt. The dogs were hard on the heels of a fox when the fox darted into a hole, but some obstruction impeded its passage and it only entered far enough to conceal its body, leaving the end of its bushy tail sticking out of the hole. When the men came near they saw one of the dogs tearing across the field with the "brush" in its mouth, and the fox flying in another direction with nothing left of its beautiful tail but the skinned stump. There are a great many people who escape from complete overthrow only as did that fox, by the loss of the beauty and joy of life. Many men put off their return to God until much of the possibility of a beautiful and helpful career has passed away. Childhood is the time to devote one's heart and life to holy living. (161)

A LOST OPPORTUNITY.

A recent writer relates how he was once making a stage ride on the Pacific Coast. He was traveling all night and was aroused from his slumbers in the middle of the night by the stage stopping to take in another traveler. The two men were alone on the inside of the stage and the newcomer seemed to be a very friendly dispositioned man who sought to while away the time by pleasant conversation. The other traveler was vexed at being aroused and would not respond, would not even listen, but turned over and went to sleep. Along about daylight the stage stopped before a mountain tavern. The stranger left at this place. As he got out of the stage he wished his impolite companion a pleasant journey in a most cheerful way and handed him his card. It seemed odd in that rude frontier country, in a stage coach, too, for a stranger to be so courteous. People seldom do that in a railroad train. The traveler shoved the card into his pocket. He was still drowsy; he slept until he reached his destination. Later in the day he came on that card in his pocket. Then he knew he had, in his determination to be comfortable, lost the opportunity of hearing some good stories from a man who has become one of the foremost writers of his time. The name on the card was Bret Harte. Many people lose the delightful and saving fellowship with Jesus Christ in the same way. They are drowsy and want to have

their own way, and Christ comes to them with cheerful face and hopeful spirit, ready to make the darkest night brighter than any day, but they sleep on and lose the greatest opportunity of life. (162)

"THE ENORMOUS SIN OF DRUNKENNESS."

An English gentleman, who has resided in Constantinople for many years, and employs a large number of men, in speaking of the laboring population, says: "The laboring Turk has a great future before him. If I want a good, reliable watchman to watch my mill, or a boatman to row me down the Golden Horn to Pera, where I reside, I employ a Turk and prefer him to a Christian." Among the reasons which he gave for preferring Turks for such offices was that they were always sober. As it is against their religious principles to drink any kind of intoxicating drinks, distilled or fermented, they are consequently free from "the enormous sin of drunkenness." What a shame it is that drunkenness should be tacked on to the name of Christian in heathen lands. But we can expect nothing else when our government so compromises itself with the iniquitous business. (163)

THE LAW OF LIFE'S ROAD.

In a world so full of perplexity as ours there is only one way of safety and that is to "keep to the right." If a man is simply trying to find what is right, with no question of policy or expediency mixed up with it, he can always, by the help of God's Word, find what is right. Charles W. Hubner has a little poem on "Keep to the Right!" which brings out a good, clear, strong message for every tempted soul:

"Keep to the right," is the law of the road—
Make it a law of your moral code;
In whatso'ere you determine to do,
Follow the road of the Good and the True;
Follow and fear not; by day and by night,
Up hill or down hill, "keep to the right."

"Keep to the right," in the journey of life,
There is crowding and jostling, trouble and strife;
The weak will succumb to the bold and the strong,
And many go under and many go wrong;
He will acquit himself best in the fight,
Who shirks not his duty, and "keeps to the right."

"Keep to the right," and the Right will keep you
In touch and accord with the Good and the True;
These are the best things in life, after all,
They make it worth living, whatever befall,
And Death has no terrors, when he comes in sight,
For the man who determines to "keep to the right." (164)

EVERYDAY HEROES.

An intelligent and brave seaman of St. John's, Newfoundland, who went not long ago on a relief expedition to the North, says he never had a better time in his life. There were rough weather and big breezes occasionally to be encountered, but the actual danger and privation were as nothing to what the ordinary fishermen suffer while fishing on the banks or while seal hunting every spring. This man was rather disgusted when he came home to be called a hero for what he had done, for he declared that there is more actual bravery and disregard for death by the fishermen who ply their calling daily on the ledges and shoals around the Newfoundland coast than all the Arctic explorers now living have shown in the course of their whole lives. Every town and city has its heroes. Brave and honorable firemen, and policemen, and railroad engineers, and others in far more quiet and obscure places every day stand by their duty and risk their lives rather than fail in the trust committed to them. Modern life is so complex that much of its heroism is covered up under red-tape, but there are more heroes to-day than ever before, and the heroic spirit is growing among men. (165)

THE THORNY PATH OF SIN.

A sad picture is given of a nineteen-year-old gambler in Dawson City, Alaska. She went up to that country as an actress, but remained to take charge of a diamond store. There was a good deal of gambling in the town and its deadly fever crept into her veins. After a week or two she was a nightly patron of the gaming table. Her cheeks grew thin and pale, her eyes curiously bright, her nerves pitifully active. She was soon so carried away with it that if a fortune was held out as a reward she could not resist its fateful fascination. Though she has been very successful in winning money she is already nervously shattered and the men of Dawson City who know thoroughly the cruel traces such a life leaves on both men and women, prophesy for her an early suicide or the madhouse. Its effects are scarcely less terrible on a young man. Nearly every city in the land has its hundreds and thousands of victims of the unlawful gaming table, victims drawn from respectable homes, but who are soon ruined under the gambler's deadly spell. (166)

THE IMMORAL THEATER.

Although we hear a good deal of talk now and then, and sometimes by ministers, about the reforming of the theater, it drags on in its slimy way of filth. So competent an authority as the famous actress, Olga Nethersole, recently declared that the only kind of play which may hope for success with English-speaking audiences at the present day is the play which is sufficiently indicated by calling it immoral. There is no doubt about it that the theater as at present conducted is pulling the stones from the foundations of public morality, and weakening and in many quarters endangering the whole structure of society. The atmosphere of the modern theater is lustful and irreverent. It is a good place for Christians to keep away from. It is a good opportunity for the strong man to deny himself for the sake of his younger or weaker brother. (167)

RUSKIN HALL.

A party of Americans headed by Mr. Walter Vrooman of St. Louis, coming to know that it was almost impossible in our day for a poor man to go to Oxford College in England and obtain an education, conceived the idea of founding there a Hall for the benefit of students who had to work their way through college. It is a plain and quietly furnished house but pleasantly situated in the quietude of the broad classic thoroughfare known as St. Giles street, amid trees and ivy-clad walls. The building being provided the students themselves do the rest, nothing but contributions to the library being asked for from the British public. Ten shillings a week is paid by each man for board, lodging and washing, and ten shillings a month for lectures. As no servants are kept, every student is expected to take his share in the domestic work of the house. Experience shows that this requires but half an hour a day. The promoters of this philanthropy have very appropriately called it Ruskin Hall, and have taken as their motto this sentence from the great philosopher's "Ethics of the Dust:" "The constant duty of every man to his fellows is to ascertain his own powers and special gifts, and to strengthen them for the help of others." And they have chosen as their declared object "Each man, by raising himself may help to raise, through influence or precept, the whole class to which he belongs." That is Christ's way of lifting the whole race toward heaven. (168)

LIFTING ROCKS FOR THE WEAK.

The honey bird is a well-known denizen of many parts of the Transvaal. It has the unique peculiarity that it does not fear men and women but actually flies up to them, uttering a plaintive low note, and, flying about their heads, tries to lead them on to the nearest clump of rocks. The bird knows full well that under a certain rock lies a store of honey, concealed by the cunning bees, and, rock honey being as much esteemed by the birds as by human beings, the clever little fellow tries to induce a friendly being with two strong hands to push aside the rock, so that it may get to the honey. If it succeeds in its object and the traveler on the Veldt attracted by the bird's flutterings to and fro between himself and the rocks, finds the honey, the bird changes its plaintive tone to one of joy and pleasure, as much as to say, "Thank you very much." If we go on our way alert and vigilant we shall see many an opportunity to turn aside the heavy rocks that hide the sweetest honey from those who are too weak to secure it unaided. What a happy fate it is to be able to use our strength in thus giving joy to the weak. (169)

VIEWING THE HEAVENS.

When the tourists begin to swarm into Switzerland next year they will be confronted at every turn, on every hill and point of vantage, on every hotel piazza boasting a "view," with automatic telescopes. Last summer there were many telescopes scattered throughout the country, which were looked after by a boy or woman who collected the fee, but now it is proposed to supply the whole region with automatic glasses which open on depositing two cents. The company is being formed at Berne which will place its automatic telescopes in all parts of the Alps next spring. It is a reason for thanking God that not only is this outer view of the heavenly world coming within the reach of all the people, but the vision of the inner glories of the heavens is becoming possible to all men everywhere. Every Christian should count it the greatest privilege to help send the missionary into the dark corners of the earth, carrying with him his telescope which reveals the beauty and grandeur of spiritual things to hearts that have never seen them before. (170)

THE FORGOTTEN BROTHER.

In holiday times when all the fortunate world is happy, it is a gracious thing to make our Christianity felt among lonely people and those who would otherwise be forgotten. Some one writing in the Atlanta Constitution tells the story of a forgotten one in a very quaint and plaintive manner:

I des so weak en sinful,
Or else, so old en po'
Dat Mister Chris'mus done fergit
De number of my do'.

I tell him "Heah I is, suh!
You been dis way befo'."
But Mister Chris'mus done fergit
De number on my do'.

I see him fin' de rich folks
Dat des don't want no mo'!
But—good Lawd knows, he done fergit
De number on my do'!

I wonders, en I wonders
Des why he slight me so?
I hopes de Lawd'll show him
De number on my do'! (171)

LIGHT THAT IS DARKNESS.

A new kind of swindle has been put into operation in Cambridge, Massachusetts. A man has been canvassing the city and selling kerosene at nine cents per gallon, two or three cents below the market rate, which the purchasers discovered too late, was nothing but fresh water and very unsatisfactory for illuminating purposes. One lady who keeps a large rooming house for college students purchased some of this bogus oil and cleaned all her lamps thoroughly and filled them with it, producing somewhat amusing results when the students tried to light them. We are warned in the Scriptures against false light. Christ says "If the light which is within thee be darkness how great is that darkness." (172)

DECEIVED BY APPEARANCES.

The Baroness Burdett-Coutts was once shopping in Paris and was passed from one department to another by the shopmen, always with the remark, "Two-ten." She was escorted from counter to counter and everywhere the cabalistic words "Two-ten" were repeated. Struck by the peculiarity of this refrain, the Baroness asked the proprietor as she left the establishment: "Pray what does 'two-ten' mean? I noticed each assistant said it to the other wherever I went in your shop." "Oh, it is nothing," he replied; "merely a pass word that they are in the habit of exchanging." But the Baroness was not satisfied with this explanation, so in the evening when a young boy brought home her purchases, she said. "My boy, would you like to earn five francs?" Of course he had no objection.

"Tell me," said the lady, "what does 'two-ten' mean, and I will give you five francs." "Why, don't you know, ma'am?" said he, evidently astonished at her ignorance. "It means, 'keep your two eyes on her ten fingers.'" The mystery was solved. The shopmen of that store had taken the richest and most generous woman in Great Britain for a shop lifter, which is a signal illustration of the fact that it is very easy for the average person to be deceived by appearances. (173)

GOLD FOR BALLAST.

Gold-bearing sand for ballast is the latest development in Cape Nome mining affairs, and it may revolutionize things. The purpose is to take it to San Francisco, where it can be treated cheaper and worked to much better advantage than at Cape Nome. If the venture proves profitable a large fleet of vessels will be put on the route next summer, which will take sand ballast from Cape Nome beaches. It is thought the sand from these beaches will assay $100 to the ton. Gold seems like a rich sand for ballast for a ship, but it will no doubt serve well its purpose in holding the ship level in a storm, without reference to the worth of the cargo. Each of us on the voyage of life should carry the true gold of character as ballast. It is the one ballast that will not list or shift, however our ship may be driven by wind and waves. (174)

HOMING PIGEONS.

Presumably the pigeons that are to serve as post boys in the Transvaal War recently arrived in Africa on the warship Powerful. These pigeons make very rapid messengers. A good pigeon will fly more than sixty miles in an hour over short distances. It is the little bird's love of home that makes it valuable in this way. When let loose on the battfield with its little quill full of message stowed away among its tail feathers, it circles round and round until its instinct tells it the way home. And then straight as a cannon ball it flies through the air, at the rate of a mile a minute or faster. There is in all our hearts this homing instinct. There is something in the heart of every man and woman that bears testimony that they belong to God, and that they should be flying toward heaven. Some like the little pigeons turned loose on the battlefield circle round and round in confusion not knowing which way to go. But if they are true to the conscience within their breast they will be drawn surely on the way home. (175)

THE MISFITS OF LIFE.

An old railroad man recently related this interesting story: One day there stepped aboard his train a well-dressed business man who, as he tendered his fare, remarked: "I see you are still on the road, Mr. Sheldon." "Yes, I am still at it," the conductor replied, "but I am not certain that I remember you though I think I have seen you before." "Yes, you have seen me before," emphasized the passenger, "and while you doubtless have forgotten it I still remember that you once did me the greatest favor of my life. Come to my seat when you get time, and I'll tell you about it." When he had finished collecting fares the conductor dropped into the stranger's seat and the passenger continued: "Years ago I was four days a brakeman aboard your train. At the end of the four days you took me aside and remarked in a tone of sympathy: 'I'm sorry to have to tell you so, but the fact is, young man, you are too much of a fool to ever make a good railroader. Take my advice and quit.'" The passenger continued, "I took your advice and went into another business, and the result is, I made a fair fortune. I thank you, Mr. Sheldon, for your wise counsel." "What is your name?" the conductor asked. "Philip D. Armour of Chicago," replied the ex-brakeman. So you see a man who is too big a fool to be a brakeman may make a great hit at packing pork. Let every young man, or young woman, seek to find the thing they can do best, for a large part of the unhappiness of life comes from trying to make a square peg fit in a round hole. To try to make yourself pursue a business for which you are not adapted is to fight against God. (176)

A LIFE BRIDGE.

"Agate bridge" is the chief wonder of that marvelous dream known as Chalcedony Park, on the petrified forest of Arizona. The bridge is a tree trunk transformed into the finest agate, which spans a chasm sixty feet wide. This precious gem is one hundred and ten feet long, four feet in diameter at the base, tapering to three feet at the apex, and it

contains enough material to give labor to all the lapidaries in the world for the next generation. How many thousand years ago, nobody knows, this tree, then in the lonely forest, fell across the chasm, and the countless years have turned it into this bridge of infinite beauty to carry the tourists of this new generation across the gulf. How many people there are whose lives serve as bridges to carry the next generation over their shoulders to victory. It is not given to all of us who fight for a good cause to see its triumph, but God and the angels see that it is a glorious and beautiful thing to build one's life into the defense of righteousness and make of our career a bridge to carry the generation that comes after us on to triumph. Surely we shall not lose our reward in the final victory. (177)

THE UNNECESSARY TERRORS OF IGNORANCE.

An amusing story is told by Mr. Woodford, the resident commissioner in the British Solomon Islands. During last year, it appears, a horse was imported from Australia by a trader for use on his cocoanut plantation. This was the first horse that had ever been brought to the Solomons. There was some difficulty in landing the animal, and, after spending a day on the platform lashed between two boats, it had to be towed over a coral reef. After the landing was effected the natives evinced the greatest dread of what seemed to them a gigantic creature, and could not be induced to go near it, with the consequence that it soon became unmanageable and wandered at will about the bush, a terror to the neighborhood. From some unexplained cause the animal died a month or two after the arrival to the intense relief of the natives. Ignorance is the mother of a great many terrors, and many of the fears that torment us are as ill-founded as those of the natives of the Solomon Islands, concerning that greatest friend of man among animals, the horse. (178)

GATHERING BEAUTY.

A composite photograph of the greatest Madonnas painted by the old masters during three hundred years, has been made by Joseph Gray Kitchell of Indianapolis after many months of work. The face is said to be marvelously beautiful, combining as it does the best conceptions of the greatest painters. The photographer has done in this case what every man and woman ought to be doing in regard to the beautiful things in character and conduct. Wherever we find in our books, or in the life of any man or woman we know, anything which adorns character and makes a life beautiful and helpful, we should gather it for the garden of our own souls. In that way the beauty of all the Madonnas and Saints will belong to us, and become incorporated into our own nature. (179)

WEIGHED IN THE BALANCES.

In the old English town of Wycomb the custom still survives of "weighing in" the Mayor. The inspector of weights and measures is master of ceremonies and the Mayor's weight is solmenly ascertained, and no less solemnly recorded in a big book, on the occasion of his induction into office. The prevalence of this curious custom is traced back to the year 1285 in the reign of Edward I. The physical weight of a Mayor, or of any other public officer, is of small interest, but if it were intended to suggest by it that the officer would be continually weighed in the balance of public opinion, then the old custom deserves very wide prevalence. We are all of us trustees of important interests which God has committed to us, and must be finally weighed in the balances of eternal justice. Happy for us if in that testing time we are not like the old king of Babylon, in Daniel's time, "found wanting." (180)

ABLE TO SAVE TO THE UTTERMOST.

One of the saddest things to be imagined occurred in a Western town recently when a little four-year-old child was drowned in an old cistern. The mother saw the child go down and at once jumped in to rescue him. The water came up to her chin. For over an hour she held the child over her head, all the time crying for assistance. None came and she was forced, through exhaustion, to drop the child, allowing it to drown. For over three hours she screamed for aid for herself but not until her husband, who was at work a mile away, came home did she succeed in securing relief. Her grief at not being able to save her child has almost driven her wild. Our Saviour who loves us with love like a mother never has to give up any one that will appeal to Him for help. "He is able to save unto the uttermost" them that come unto God by Him. (181)

IMITATING THE DEFECTS OF THE GREAT.

Senator Chauncey Depew of New York tells an amusing and interesting anecdote at the expense of a dissipated member of Congress: The Congressman in question was being shaved by an aged colored barber in Washington. The shop was a favorite one with the prominent men of the Capitol, and the old colored man who presided over it often boasted that he had shaved every great statesman since the Madison administration. The member of Congress referred to was being shaved by the veteran one day, when he said to the latter: "Uncle, you must have shaved many famous men?" "Oh, yes, sah; I have indeed." "And a great many of those famous personages must have sat in this very chair where I am sitting, eh?" "Dat's right, sah. Dey's set jus' whar yo' is a settin' dis moment, sah. Yes, sah. An' I'se jes' been a noticin' a mighty cur's similarity between yo' and Dan'el Webster, sah." "You don't say!" exclaimed the highly delighted law-maker. "Is the similarity in the shape of my head, Uncle?" "Oh, no, sah, 'tain't dat." "Is it my manner?" "No, boss, 'tain't yore manner nudder; hit's yore breff." There are a great many light weights among men who imitate greatness only in its defects and sins. The lack of sobriety in Daniel Webster has sent many a man to a drunkard's grave. (182)

THE POETRY OF COMMON LIFE.

A farmer in Illinois has painted the picture of a corn field, that is to be shown at the Paris Exposition next year. In painting this picture the farmer artist has accepted the challenge of James Whitcomb Riley, who in his ballad, "When the frost is on the pumpkin and the fodder's in the shock," says that the farm presents a picture that "no painter has the colorin' to mock." Mr. Montgomery once called the attention of the Hoosier Poet to this challenge and he announced that he would accept it. He claims that he has taken no lessons except from nature. He has painted during the last thirty years hundreds of farm scenes. It is claimed that so realistic are some of the ears of corn seen in the pictures that they have at different times attracted the nibble of a horse and the peck of a hen. It is always beautiful to see any man who appreciates the poetry in the common work which he does to earn his bread. There is no life so hard and grimy, but it has in it some poetic beauty which a happy heart and a cheerful spirit can discover. Such a spirit makes all the difference between slavery and victorious achievement. (183)

ON A DANGEROUS TRACK.

A young man who recently crossed over the Grand River on a railway bridge at Painesville, Ohio, had a thrilling experience. He had just passed the center when a fast train rounded the curve behind him. As the engine whistled he quickened his pace. With every step the train was rushing nearer and there was not a moment to lose. Once the young man stumbled and seemed about to fall, but quickly regained his balance and hurried on. As he reached the first possible place for escape the train was close behind and he had just time to swing himself over the side of the bridge as the locomotive thundered by. The ends of the ties were slippery with grease from dripping axle boxes and his foot slipped wide as he left the track. His right hand, stretched blindly out before him, touched a round iron bar, bracing two parts of the bridge, and with a grip like that of a drowning man his fingers clasped around it. For a moment he swung in empty air. In another his left hand had found a place beside his right and his feet touched the welcome edge of a brace below. With bleeding fingers touching the slender iron bar that vibrated widely from side to side, moments seemed hours. At last the train passed and the young man was able to climb slowly to the track above. All who walk in the track of sin are in imminent danger of disaster. No man walks in the path of unrighteousness except at his peril. Rare, indeed, is the sinner with so hard a heart that he would not flee if he understood the deadly Nemesies that follow in the track of wrong doing. The Scripture says, "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts and return unto the Lord who will have mercy upon him, and unto our God who will abundantly pardon." (184)

MORAL HEROISM.

An English officer relates that at the bombardment of Odessa the Lieutenant in command of the fore-castle quarters on one of the English war-ships was a man who was universally popular. He was very fat and had the usual characteristics of fat men. He had often told his friend, who tells the story, of his desire to distinguish himself, but as

soon as the Russian shot came flying about the fore-castle he entirely lost his nerve and became physically incapable, the perspiration streaming down his terrified face. He became actually ill, but so morally brave was he that nothing would induce him to leave his quarters; by a stupendous and amazing moral effort he stuck to his post in spite of his terror, and remained on the forecastle until the fight was over. That is the kind of courage which counts in the great moral struggles that are going on in our day. We want men who though they know the danger and fear it, are still incapable of shirking their duty. (185)

"THE DEEPER MEANING OF THE WORLD."

Edwin Markham in his recent poem on the "Immortal Youth of the Poet" has some very striking and beautiful lines. The most suggestive thought, however, is that which makes the great characteristic of the poet, the man who sees the deeper meaning of the world. In that sense every true Christian is something of a poet The essence of poetry is in his heart, though he may not have learned how to rhyme. It is the very heart of Christianity that it gives us a new conception concerning the meanings of nature and of human life. Markham's tribute to the poet might well be applied to any genuine Christian as one who,

> "Sees, in some dead leaf, dried and curled,
> The deeper meaning of the world;
> Hears through the roar of mortal things
> The God's immortal whisperings;
> Sees the world-wonder rise and fall,
> And knows that Beauty made it all." (186)

TIME TO THINK.

The discipline of the Royal Navy of Great Britain is iron in its severity, but all that human effort can effect is tried to insure that impartial justice shall be done. The bulk of punishments awarded are headed "SUMMARY" in order to distinguish them from those awarded by courts martial, but strictly speaking there are no cases of summary punishments in the Navy. By one of the wisest rules possible a period of twenty-four hours must elapse between the report of an offense and the awarding of punishment therefor, so that the officer passing sentence, who may have been personally aggrieved, has time to think the matter over and has no excuse for inflicting punishment in a spirit of revenge. If parents and employers and all those who deal with the lives and happiness of others, and who of us does not in some way, would only take "time to think" before speaking the harsh word, or enforcing the rigorous sentence, how much unnecessary misery would be saved! (187)

FORGIVING OUR DEBTORS.

A venerable citizen of Tennessee being convinced, not long ago, that his time had come to die, determined that the last act of his life should be a practical interpretation of the invocation "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors." A messenger was dispatched to summon all his debtors to the bedside of the dying man and they came under the apprehension of being called on to settle, but their astonishment can be imagined when the old man gave to each one the note held against him and thus squared the account. Several thousand dollars indebtedness was wiped out by this philanthropic deed. If he thought to buy off the justice of God in that way it was of course valueless. But if it illustrated the spirit in which he had lived it is a very suggestive message for us all. (188)

HIDING THE GOOD NEWS.

An inventor recently died in Knoxville, Tennessee, who is said to have discovered and perfected the lost art of tempering copper and welding it with steel. This process was known to the people of ancient Egypt, but was afterward lost and has been sought for in vain for hundreds of years. This inventor was a blacksmith and experimented with copper for years, and only last year hit upon the secret for which he had been seeking. He would never disclose the process to any one. The secret of it is believed to have perished with him. It is a great blessing that in spiritual matters there is no temptation to hide any good news that may come to us. Our own joy is not narrowed by giving the secrets of salvation to our neighbors. The more we tell the good tidings of divine mercy and the more who enter into the riches of grace, the greater our own happiness. (189)

A BOLD SWIMMER.

The steamer Welott was wrecked not long ago on some rocks at the mouth of Humboldt Bay, and it seemed at first that all the passengers and crew must be lost. But finally a brave man by the name of Morgan went to the rescue. He plunged into the terrible breakers with a line about his body and swam through the storm when it seemed impossible for any human being to live in such a sea, and finally reached the rocks, climbed upon them and the life-saving crew took the seemingly doomed people ashore in a basket. Christ came swimming to us through the storm and the breakers when there was no other hope and brought to us the strong life line of salvation. No one is in so hard a plight, no one wrecked on so dangerous a reef, but what if he lifts his heart to Him the life line of hope shall come. (190)

AN UNFADING CROWN.

The crown of Russia is at present supposed to be the richest in diamonds of any crown in the world. Besides several valuable collections in the Imperial Treasury, there are three crowns entirely composed of these stones. That of Ivan Alexiowitch contains eight hundred and eighty-one; that of Peter the Great eight hundred and forty-seven, and that of Catherine II., two thousand five hundred and thirty-six. One of its most remarkable diamonds is the "Orloff," now set in the top of the Imperial scepter, and on this account is sometimes called the "Scepter" diamond. But there is a better crown than that, and one which the humblest Christian in the world may make sure of. It is the one Peter tells us about, "A crown of glory that fadeth not away. (191)

THE STARS AS TIME-KEEPERS.

Probably the majority of people suppose that the observatories obtain the correct time from the sun. When the average man wishes to give his watch the highest praise he says, "It regulates the sun," not being aware that a watch that would keep with the sun around the year would have to be a very bad watch indeed. Astronomers depend almost wholly on the stars for obtaining accurate time. There are several hundred stars whose positions have been established with the greatest accuracy by the most careful observations at a number of the principal observatories of the world. If a star's exact position is known, it can readily be calculated when it will pass the meridan of any given place—that is, the instant it will cross a north and south line through the place. The data regarding these stars are all published in the Nautical Almanacs, which are gotten out by several different observatories for the use of navigators and all others who have uses for them. These stars are known as "Clock Stars." God designs that Christians shall be the time-keepers in morals and in witness to Christ for many people who have not learned yet to get their light from heaven. Many a father and mother stands in the place of God to their children, and many a person whom we meet will never see the truth unless they read it in us. How true we ought to be to God, what faithful testimony we should bear to Christ, since our lives may have such fateful influence on others. (192)

MORBID SELF-ANALYSIS.

A wonderful piece of self-analysis occurs in one of John Donne's funeral sermons: "I throw myself down in my chamber, and I call in and invite God and His angels together, and when they are there I neglect God and His angels for the noise of a fly, for the rattling of a coach, for the whining of a dog; I talk on in the same posture of prayer, eyes lifted up, knees bowed down, as though I prayed to God; and if God should ask me when I last thought of God in that prayer I cannot tell. Sometimes I find that I forgot what I was about, but when I began to forget it I cannot tell. A memory of yesterday's pleasures, a fear of to-morrow's dangers, a straw under my knee, a noise in mine ear, a chimera in my brain, troubles me in my prayer." It is not wise to hold post-mortem examinations on ourselves. It is better to give ourselves to the best of our ability to God's service and leave ourselves in the hands of Him who has taught us to say, "Our Father." (193)

THE WINGS OF GENIUS.

An amusing story is related of Professor Lyon Playfair. He once went to examine a phosphate mine. The manager of the mine was a Scotchman, tall, big-boned, with the strongest Glasgow Doric in his tongue. When he first came upon the Professor and his

companions he was angry and demanded that they should leave the ground, and drop the specimens which they had taken before he appeared. At last the Professor addressed him in good Scotch, and asked the manager if he thought he was a mining adventurer. "Ay! That's just what ye are." "No," he replied, "I am a Scotch Professor." "Then if ye are, ye'll be having' a name." "My name, is Playfair." "Man!" said the Scotchman, "are ye Lyon Playfair?" The Professor assured him he was, but expressed surprise that the manager should know his name. To which he replied, looking from his six feet two inches with compassion on the little Professor's five feet four inches, "Hoot, mon, yer name's traveled further than yer wee legs will ever carry ye." The wings of genius can get along without a big physique; Paul and Wesley, and multitudes of others who have made all humanity their debtors, have got along with small bodies. (194)

STANDING BY ONE'S COLORS.

Whittier, the Quaker poet, wrote to Gail Hamilton in 1866, a letter which has been recently published, in which he related a very characteristic incident: "I must tell thee something droll. Last week the Amoskeag Veterans from New Hampshire, and a Massachusetts company, with military bands, came and paraded before our house, and Governor Smyth of New Hampshire and one or two other officers called on me. When they left and I stepped out to see them civilly off, the men in epaulets got up a grand military salute, with music and three cheers to wind up with! Was ever a Quaker in such a predicament? I did, I fear, somewhat compromise myself by lifting, almost involuntarily, my hand to my hat—but I resisted the temptation and only pulled my hat lower down over my brows by way of testimony." There is your true man of principle. Every soldier honored the Quaker poet the more for standing true to his own character and personality. It is always safe and right in this world, or any world, to stand square by your own principles. (195)

A PET SIN.

An amateur snake fancier in Brooklyn, New York, was recently bitten by a Florida Water Moccasin which he was feeding, and his life has been in danger. The snake was a large one, and was one which he had petted for quite a while, and which he thought to be so thoroughly tamed that it was no longer dangerous. Sometimes men get so accustomed to certain sins that the shock of conscious wrong-doing that came to them when they first transgressed ceases to be felt and they imagine that in some way their sin is tamed and they are not in danger. But God is not to be thus mocked. Sin is always a venomous thing and its wages is death. (196)

DESTROYING ONE ANOTHER.

A hunter in the North-eastern woods recently came upon the remains of a couple of magnificent deer which had evidently been engaged in deadly combat until their horns had become locked together, and not being able to extricate themselves they had evidently starved to death in that situation. The horns are so interlocked that it is impossible to get them apart without destroying them. So these strong and beautiful dwellers of the forest had destroyed one another and the two had died together. That is not an uncommon result of strife among men and women. No wonder Christ pronounces a great benediction upon the peace-maker. Such a man is often the cause of the salvation of those whom he brings into harmony. (197)

A MILLIONAIRE PAUPER.

A man recently died in an Eastern town who was estimated to have been worth many millions of dollars. But the miserly spirit had so grown upon him that during the last years of his life he suffered from constant fear that he should die in want. For several years it had been necessary to have a trained nurse constantly in attendance on him. One day a year or so ago he called the nurse to him and said: "I feel very grateful for all you have done for me and I would like to have you stay, but I can't afford to undergo unnecessary expense, and now that I am feeling better, I think I shall have to let you go." The nurse reported to the family what the millionaire said and it was then arranged that she should tell the old man that, rather than leave a place that she had held so long she would work for nothing. And he agreed to let her stay until she had found another place. And

so the nurse remained with him until the end. Surely his fifty millions of dollars could not have been a very great comfort to him while thus haunted with his inability to surround himself with necessary comforts. Let no man imagine that money is the great necessity of life, nor, indeed, the great luxury. A pure heart, a clean mind, and an assurance that we are pleasing God, and that all things must work together for our good, can give more happiness than any number of millions of dollars. (198)

THE POWER OF THE IMAGINATION.

An English traveler once met a companion sitting in a state of the most woful despair, and apparently near the last agonies, by the side of one of the mountain lakes of Switzerland. He inquired the cause of his suffering. "Oh," said he, "I was very hot and thirty, and took a large draught of the clear water of the lake, and then sat down on this stone to consult my guide book. To my astonishment, I found that the water of this lake is very poisonous! Oh! I am a lost man—I feel it running all over me—I have only a few minutes to live." "Let me see the guide book," said his friend. Turning to the passage he found, "L'eau du lac est bien poissonn euse."—"The water of this lake abounds in fish." "Is that the meaning of it?" "Certainly." The dying man looked up with a radiant countenance. "What would have become of you," said his friend, "if I had not met you?" "I should have died of imperfect knowledge of the French language." The imagination can never be left out of account. Its power is beyond all ordinary estimates and no man can afford to allow his imagination to feed upon impure food. (199)

CAREFUL OF OUR INFLUENCE.

Our unconscious influence is so great that we need line upon line, and precept upon precept, to arouse ourselves to the full measure of our responsibility concerning it. Sarah K. Bolton gives us a clear message in her recently published poem on "Influence:"

The smallest bark on life's tumultuous ocean
Will leave a track behind forever more;
The lightest wave of influence, once in motion,
Extends and widens to the eternal shore.
We should be wary, then, who go before
A myriad yet to be, and we should take
Our bearing carefully, where breakers roar
And fearful tempests gather: One mistake
May wreck unnumbered barks that follow in our wake. (200)

OUTLINE OF A SERMON BY SPURGEON.

From C. H. Spurgeon's "Fac-simile Pulpit Notes," published by Passmore & Alabaster, London, the following outline is taken, the sermon being delivered at the Metropolitan Tabernacle, Newington, by the famous preacher, Sunday evening Sept. 15, 1899.

Matt. 27: 27.

The Saviour not protected in the common rights even of prisoners. Men set on scorning.

Why gather together the whole band?

It was not necessary for his security nor execution.

I. The men were unanimous in mocking their prisoner.

1. Men are apt to go together in evil.

2. Frequently no man cares to stand out. What honor if he had?

3. The number made their conduct the meaner.

4. It also accounted for the excess of scorn.

II. *So are men united in opposing Christ.*

1. They do not pass Him by with neglect. Curiosity and an evil conscience bring them out.

2. They feel an inward derision of His claims. Too absurd! Ignorant their meaning the great condemned.

3. They invent divers methods of showing it.

One strips Him: denying the great truths.
Another puts clothes on Him.
Another insults His royalty.
Crown of thorns: insults, persecutions.
Scpetre of reed: makes Mim a myth.
Another mocks Him with hypocritical prayer.
Yet another spits, rancorous reviling.

4. All this showed hardness of their hearts.

III. *What shall we say of it?*

1. Some of thes were testifiers.

2. These rebuke the backward among their friends.

3. They chide uninventiveness of disciples.

4. They excite our admiration of our patient Lord.

5. They suggest all our faculties should pour contempt on sin.

Extract from sermon: "I have given up all idea now that we are living in a Christian country. Believers in England are a band of Christ's soldiers who are holding the fort against deadly odds. Ours is a heathen country, with an admixture of Christian people, and a smear, a varnish, of pretended religion, but a heathen country still. And every now and then some outspoken heathen, by his awful profanity, makes us wish we could not hear at all. This is how they spit on Christ. One does it very politely with a bow; another comes forward and abuses both the Christ and His cross. One will undermine the truth; another brings the battering ram, in open day, to beat down the citadel; but they are so united together that with one accord the whole band of soldiers is gathered against Christ."

Some texts used by Spurgeon: John 3: 33; John 10: 27-29; Acts 16: 33-34; Acts 17: 27; Rom. 4: 24-25.

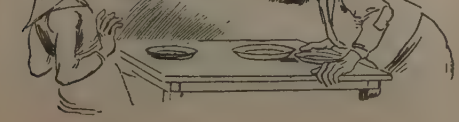
VAIN WISHES.

Penned and Pictured by Frank Beard.

I remember years and years ago when I was a little chap, my grandmother told me a funny story that I have never heard since, and have never forgotten, so it may be new to my readers; at any rate it will make a fine peroration to my argument.

Once upon a time there lived in a little hut an old man and his wife. They were not very well supplied with this world's luxuries, but on the whole managed to scrape along without suffering from grim want. On one occasion as they were sitting at their frugal meal of something or other, I forget what, the old lady began to complain of their condition, lamenting, among other things, the lack of variety in their repast. "Oh, dear! I wish we might have one real feast before we die," said she.

"If wishing would do any good, you might as well wish for a feast every day of your life," replied the old man.



"Why, yes," said the old woman. "If we knew our wishes would be granted we would exercise more care in making them."

"I doubt if you would," grumbled the old man, "but if we had three wishes granted us I would be willing to let you have two of them, for I could get all I wanted in one wish, because I should put my wish into such shape it would include almost everything a man could desire."

Just then the door opened and the Witch of the Forest or a Fairy Godmother, or some other esoteric personage—I forget just who—appeared and remarked that she had heard their conversation and was there to inform them that they might have, as they desired, three wishes which should be instantly granted as soon as spoken.

On hearing this promise, the old woman's face lighted up with joy and she cried: "I haven't tasted pudding since I was a little girl, and oh! I wish we had a beautiful black pudding on the table."

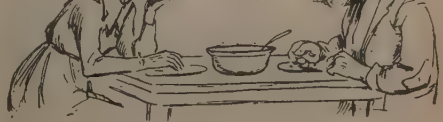
Instantly the wished for pudding appeared on the table.

This foolish wish irritated the husband.

"What an idiot you are!" he yelled, "to waste one of our precious wishes in that way. Don't you know you might have wished to be Queen of the Nation? Women haven't any

sense, any way. You fool, I wish your pudding would stick fast to your nose."

And sure enough, the words were hardly out of his mouth before the pudding flew up and stuck fast to her nose, and all their efforts to remove it in vain. They couldn't pull it off or cut it off, it just stuck there and would doubtless have hung to her nose for the rest of her life if she had not utilized their one remaining wish to free herself from the uncomfortable incumbrance, thus leaving them in exactly the same circumstances they were in before the little comedy began.



CURRENT ANECDOTES

(EXCLUSIVELY FOR PREACHERS.)

A paper furnishing illustrations and their morals, for religious public speakers.

(*Incorporating Cut Gems, Troy, N. Y.*)

PUBLISHED BY

CURRENT ANECDOTES CO.

Association Bldg, Cleveland, Ohio.

LOUIS ALBERT BANKS, - - - - EDITOR.
F. M BARTON, - PRES. AND EDITOR OF DEPARTMENTS.
J. H. NORTON, - - SECRETARY AND TREASURER.
YATES & KIMBALL, 1031 Temple Court, New York, EASTERN ADVERTISING AGENTS.
F. K. KAUFFMAN, Association Bldg, Chicago, WESTERN ADVERTISING AGENT.

SUBSCRIPTION: { In U.S., Canada and Mexico, ONE DOLLAR PER YEAR.

Foreign Subscriptions, 25c. extra, for postage.

[COPYRIGHTED BY CURRENT ANECDOTES CO., 1899.]

Entered at the Post Office at Cleveland, O., as second class matter.

Issued JANUARY, 1900. Monthly

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Many and many a time, says D. L. Moody, I have found that when the sermon—and even the text—has been forgotten, some story has fastened itself in a hearer's mind, and has borne fruit. Anecdotes are like windows to let light in upon a subject. They have a useful ministry.

Another friend writes us as follows:

There are ministers who pride themselves on their ability to preach without ever using an illustration and there are others whose sermons are almost wholly made up of them. There is a "golden mean" between these equally objectionable extremes, which it should be the laudable ambition of every minister of Christ to reach. But in illustrating sermons too great care cannot be taken in the selection of illustrations. The forcefulness of many a sermon is destroyed by the triteness, while the want of force of many has been greatly redeemed by the freshness of the illustrations used. There should be a constant draft made upon all departments of human knowledge and life and in this work-a-day world no illustrations are more highly appreciated than those taken from current events and no one seems to be happier and more successful than Dr. Banks in transforming everything to good account along this line. The moment I saw Current Anecdotes I said, 'That is just what I want.' His sermons have no doubt more than once been stripped of such to embellish other sermons and we felt as, no doubt, others did, especially pleased that he would hereafter do his own stripping and let us have them shorn of all their homiletical belongings. I am not a prophet in the sense of foretelling future events, but drawing a bow at a venture I predict that Pothers' Cyclopedia of Prose and Poetical Illustrations, so helpful to us all in the past, will in the near future be superceded by Current Anecdotes Cyclopedia of Illustrations, Prose and Poetical, which will be fresher. What better office could the laity do for themselves and pastors, where they do not seem inclined to invest, than to purchase these books for them to relieve themselves of the necessity of having reiterated to them over and over again the same illustrative matter. We heard of an official board who took the initiative along this line and were so pleased with results as to recommend that others go and do likewise, that the investment was a good one.

Replies to letters concerning our book number "Best Books for a Minister's Library") were delayed, so that our February number will contain that article. Every minister who reads this will want that book number. It makes valuable suggestions and makes interesting reading. We would be pleased to have you write us and tell us the book or books that have influenced your life the most, excepting, of course, the Bible.

It is the intention of Current Anecdotes to present nothing but illustrative matter. We make an exception this month in presenting Dr. Watson's (Ian Maclaren) address. It deals with the subject that is uppermost in the mind of the religious world, and does it so clearly, broadly and yet so vigorously that we think it very interesting reading.

"The sum expanded during the last hundred years for missionary purposes cannot be less than $300,000,000, and is likely to be nearer $500,000,000, especially if home expenses are included, and all such auxiliary instrumentalities as Bible, tract, and other publishing societies, and the cost of translating and printing, of producing the vast mass of literature required for the educational work. This sum though large, is not a tithe of what is imperatively required, or of what might easily have been bestowed. From many professed disciples of Christ not a penny was derived, most were possessed of no sort of conception of their obligation or privilege in this great matter, and only the few presented that which cost the least self-denial and self-sacrifice."

From "Missionary Annals of the Nineteenth Century" published by F. M. Barton, Cleveland, O.

DEPARTMENTS.

Incidents Old and New, Biography, History, Art, Poetry, Hymnology, etc.

Edited by F. M. Barton.

GLEANED FROM LIFE.

F. B. Meyer's Experience.

I remember so well, dear friends, the day when Charlie Studd looked into my face and said, "Mr. Meyer, there is nothing that I have got that you may not have"; he looked so bright. I can see him now, that autumn morning, standing there in his cricket flannels. It was rather chilly and the morning sun was streaming in the uncurtained window and the candles were burning low on each side of his open Bible. And I said to him, "You have been up early." "Yes," he said, "I got up at 4 o'clock this morning. Christ always knows when I have had sleep enough, and He wakes me to have a good time with Him. And I said: "What have you been doing this morning?" And he said, "You know the Lord says, 'If ye love Me, keep My commandments,' and I was just looking through all the commandments that I could find that the Lord gave and putting a tick against them if I had kept them, because I do love Him." "Well," I said to him, "how can I be like you?" "Well," I said, "I have done so in the general way, but I don't know that I have done so particularly." He said, "You must do it particularly also." I knelt down that night and thought I could give myself to Christ as easy as possible. And I gave Him an iron ring, the iron ring of my will, with all the keys of my life on it, except one little key that I kept back. And He said: "Are they all here?" I said, "They are all there but one, the key of a tiny closet in my heart of which I must keep control." He said: "If you don't trust Me in all, you don't trust Me at all." I tried to make terms; I said, "Lord, I will be so devoted in everything else, but I can't live without the contents of that little closet." I believe, young friends, that my whole life was just hovering on the balance, and, if I had kept the key of that closet and had mistrusted Christ, He never would have trusted me with His blessed Word. He seemed to be receding from me, and I called Him back and said: "I am not willing, but I am willing to be made willing." It seemed as though He took that key out of my hand and went straight for that closet. I knew what He would find there, and He knew, too. Within a week from that time He had cleared it right out. But He filled it with something so much better! Why, what a fool I was! He wanted to take away the sham jewels to give me the real ones. He just took away the thing that was eating out my life and instead gave me Himself. (872)

Think of Saving Men.

Going home one day an old fisherman invited me into his house. There upon the wall was a little picture. It wasn't very fine; it wasn't painted by one of the Royal Academy; it was a very simple little picture: a vessel upon the rocks in a tempestuous sea, and then a boat with two boys in it going to help. The old fisherman looked at the picture, and with a tearful face said: "That boat there—that is my boy." And then he told me the story. He said: "That vessel went upon the rocks. They saw, and nobody knew what to do. It was a terrible storm. The sea was very high, so that they couldn't do anything. Yet they could not bear to let the ship go down and the men without doing something, and they went out in that vessel you see there. They got up near, and they couldn't get any nearer. They knew no boat could live in that sea, and all they could do was just to stay there, and the vessel on the rocks was going to pieces. My boy couldn't stand it. He went to the captain and said: 'Captain, I'm going to save those men.' And the captain said: 'Nelson, if you try, you will be drowned.' And my boy says: 'Captain, I'm not thinking of being drowned. I'm thinking of saving those men.' And one of the men said: 'I'll go with you.' They went, and they saved every one of the men in the wreck. And my boy said to me after he got back: 'Father, it seemed to me as if the waves were smoother near us than they were everywhere around.' And I said: 'Nelson, my boy; that is God.'" This is the word I want to leave with you. If you are thinking of being "drowned," why "drowned" you will be; but if you are thinking of "saving those men," saved those men will be.—Dr. McKenzie's address at Northfield. (873)

Our Father.

On one of the battlefields of the late war, a young soldier was wounded so badly that no human skill could assure recovery. He grew rapidly worse, and in his delirium called piteously for his mother. The gentle surgeon at the hospital telegraphed her at once, and she arrived at midnight. He met her at the entrance of the ward, and restrained her impatient feet: "Madame, your son hangs between life and death; a moment of excitement, and there may be no hope. You must not see him now."

For three long hours she waited outside the ward, near enough to see her darling boy, though dimly, and catch with the quickness of a mother's ear, each groan of pain. At last she laid hold of the surgeon's arm: "Doctor, I shall die if I stay here. Let me go in and sit beside him. I will not speak; only let me do what the nurse is doing, soothe his brow and smooth his pillow." The nurse was called, and the mother then took the place by the cot, once

more enjoined by the surgeon to do nothing by which she might be recognized. She sat in silence—the face of the dying soldier turned to the wall. He groaned feebly. She, to quiet him, laid her hand on his hot forehead. Instantly he turned himself about, and said, "Nurse, how like my mother's hand!" Even to that delirious lad there was that in a mother's touch which no other stranger could counterfeit. And so in that touch of Christ, upon that loathsome leper, there is revealed all the Fatherhood of God! That was likewise the Father's hand, it was the Father's hand!—Many Infallible Proofs. (874)

A Ghastly Inferno.

Filth was thrown from one side of the room to the other by anyone who could move his hand for the purpose of doing so; and as soon as this disgusting element was introduced, the mass, in its effort to avoid being struck with it, swayed from side to side, fought, bit, and struggled like mad dogs, as far as their packed conditon would allow. They kicked with their bars and chains the shins of those next them, and the scene became one such as only a Dante might describe. Any prisoner who went down on such a night never got up again alive; his cries would not be heard above the appalling pandemonium of clanking chains and bars, imprecations and cursings; and for anyone to attempt to bend down to assist, only meant his going under also. In the morning, when we were allowed to stream out, five and sometimes six bodies would be found on the ground with the life crushed and trampled out of them.—In the Khalifa's Clutches. (875)

If any Man Thirst.

Eventually, I merged from the scrub on to the open plain in the immediate vicinity of the depot, where I shortly after arrived—greatly to the men's surprise and alarm, at seeing my dreadful condition. I now found that, owing to the swollen state of my tongue from thirst, I could neither utter a sound nor yet swallow, although the maddening craving for water had returned at the sight and smell of it. For even pure water can be smelt when a man is urgently in need of it. My men threw buckets of water over me, and I believe that the pores of my skin must have absorbed it like a sponge, as my condition became greatly relieved. Presently, not being able to articulate, I wrote an order for the horses to be brought in at once and loaded up. Fo tunately they were near the camp in hobbles, and by 1 a. m. a rescue party was ready, consisting of a couple of men and my black tracker, with four horses loaded with as much water as we could contrive appliances to carry.—Captain Barclay's experience during a drought in Australia, in the Wide-World Magazine. (876)

Cure for Sin.

Every one has heard of Lourdes, the famous place of pilgrimage and more or less miraculous cures. Interesting indeed have been the descriptions given of the heavily-laden "white train" that leaves the big Paris terminus for the little town in the heart of the Pyrenees. The sick are laid out thus in the afternoon to be cured by the Holy Host during the procession. The space in front of the church of Rosary is kept free, and the sick and the general crowd form a strange oblong, walling in this open space. The priest carrying the Sacred Host walks slowly around. A tiny golden umbrella is held by another priest over his head. He looks gorgeous in his cloth of gold vestments. He paces slowly around, lifting up the Host over the sick, and priests and crowd cry out incessantly and with heart touching pathos: "Marie, ayes pitie de nous; Seigneur guerissez nos maladies." Last year, during the pilgrimage, sixty sorely stricken people are said to have leaped up. We can be cured of sin anywhere at anytime by calling on Jesus Christ, and may through faith leap into eternal life. (877)

Castaway.

An experience after being cast away in an open boat for 27 days: About 6 o'clock the boats were drawn up close together. We had no prayer-book and only one Bible, but we tried to do our best in the way of a burial service. All the men uncovered their heads; those who could still stand stood up, and the first mate read the thirty-ninth Psalm. We then repeated the Lord's Prayer all together, and as the last tremulous words were uttered, our shipmate's body was dropped over the side of the boat. As we faintly uttered the words, "Give us this day our daily bread," there was a dead pause before any man went on to the next line; and if that moment's pause could have been translated into words, of what pent-up agony would it not have told? The day passed quietly enough, and, as was usual now, in unbroken silence. If each man's thoughts could have been read that day, the one uppermost, I think, would have been as to whose turn would be next? We were almost dazed when we found ourselves once more on board a good ship. It was now thirty days since we had discovered the fire on board the San Rafael, and of these twenty-seven had been spent in an open boat, and the last eight of these had been spent totally without food.—How many souls are drifting like these poor castaways? (878)

Mother's Care.

During a recent visit to a nearby asylum I saw in one of the obscure wards, lying on a bed, a woman totally deprived of reason from her infancy. She was utterly helpless to do more than lie on her stomach with her feet drawn up far over her back, and lift her head, constantly turning it from side to side, and with the protrusion of her tongue utter, at frequent intervals, a distressed guttural expression. There sat by her bedside an old woman with calm and patient face, whose only service while I remained, was a frequent tender caress with the hand upon the face of her daughter. As the daughter would look intently into the face of her mother and express an apparently reproachful ejaculation, and the faithful mother would respond with the tenderest demonstration of loving care, I thought of the sig-

nificance of the statement that God's care for His children is greater than that of an earthly parent. I learned that this aged mother had been the constant companion of her helpless daughter for forty-one years, tenderly caring for her wants, and never leaving her night or day. During all this time never an intelligent communication could pass between the two. The daughter was incapable of knowing the long years of patient care inspired by a mother's love. So I thought, may not the child of Christ be incapable in this life, of comprehending the love and care of Him who has said, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." —M. M. Welch. (879)

True to His Master.

The following incident coming down from "slavery times in the old south," gives us an unparalleled lesson of faithfulness to the interests of another. At the beginning of the war of 1861, "Bill," a colored boy, was the property of John W. Key, who lived near Tullahoma, Tenn., and when "Ole Marse John and de boys went in de army Bill went along wid 'em to keep dem Yankys frum freein' de niggers," but in spite of their efforts "de niggers wus sot free." Everything was swept away by the war except the farm and it was mortgaged seemingly beyond hope of redemption, and to make matters worse, shortly after their return "Marse John" died, leaving "Ole Mistus and de chilluns" with a lot of "free niggers" and a mortgaged farm. The other negroes soon relieved themselves of responsibility by seeking homes elsewhere, but Bill, who had learned blacksmithing and horse doctoring in the army, went to work with a heroic will and actually paid off the mortgage and thus rescued the family from debt and want. After that Bill set up for himself, accumulated considerable property and came to be known as Doctor William Key, but he always insisted that he was a "Confederate veteran" because "Marse John wuz." Taught in childhood that the ways of "Ole Marse" were right and that his interests were supreme, Bill kept faith and followed his leader unfalteringly to the end. How many Christians who read this always keep the interests of the Master above everything else?—T. M. Hurst. (880)

Secret, Deadening Sins.

In 1845 a 12-year-old boy, active, hardy, tough and healthy, went with his father to one of the farms to get the horses, on a Sunday morning, expecting to go to church, three miles away. Boy-fashion the youngster rode his horse on the canter. The father was too indulgent, and did not restrain the boy, by calling him back. A neighbor's dog gave chase and the boy was thrown from the horse. The horse stepped upon a limb below the knee. The limb was bruised, but no bone was broken. Secret mischief, however, was done on the limb. It was equal to the formation of a bad habit. Twelve months rolled around and necrosis of the bone developed into a disease too terrible for human language to express. Deadened bones demanded amputation, and this brought about over half a century of crippled life. Necrosis of the bones, and the pandering to habits—as to temper or appetite—are dangerous. (881)

MEN AND MENTION.

Reverence for God's House.

When General Grant was in Paris the president of the Republic, as a token of respect, sent him an invitation to witness the Sunday racing. Such a thing as a refusal had never been heard of, but General Grant very politely declined the honor, saying it was not the custom of his country, or with the spirit of his religion, to spend Sunday in that way. When the Sabbath came that great hero was one of the quiet worshippers in the American chapel. Such reverence for the Lord's day is greatly needed now in this country as elsewhere. (882)

Wilberforce and God's House.

When Wilberforce was in the midst of overwhelming anxiety and labor on behalf of the slaves, he declared that he owed the continuance of his mental powers to the periodical return of Sunday and attending God's house; and writing to a friend he gave him this word of warning: "If you do not observe the Sabbath and the Lord's house you will either kill yourself or your mind." (883)

Discouraging.

George Stephenson, a lad of 18, joined an evening school. The master, eyeing his rough exterior, said, scornfully, "A great bare-legged laddie like you had better be doing something else than learning his letters." In after years, people jeered and called him a fool when he declared he would construct a locomotive running fourteen miles an hour. Still he pushed on and built the "Rocket," attaining a speed of thirty miles an hour. Then honour and wealth were heaped on him, and the air filled with his praises, and people laughed no longer.—Life of Stephenson. (884)

Hobson at Sunday School.

When the Sunday-school of St. Paul's church, Greensboro, assembled on Sunday morning, several years ago, says a Youth's Companion correspondent, a young man in the uniform of a naval cadet appeared and took his place in a class of older boys.

He was greeted cordially and the lesson pointed out to him, but he was already prepared for the recitation. Arriving from Annapolis only the day before, to spend his vacation with his family, he had taken pains to find from a neighbor what the lesson was to be, and had prepared it with the same care that he has since given to the study of problems in naval construction—or destruction. For the young naval cadet was Richmond P. Hobson, churchman, scholar and hero. (885)

General Lee's Kindness.

On one occasion, in 1864, when General Lee was visiting a battery on the lines below Richmond, the soldiers crowded around him and attracted the fire of the enemy. He said to them quietly but earnestly: "Men, you had better go into the back yard; they are firing at us here, and you are exposing yourselves to unnecessary danger." The men obeyed the order, but saw their chief walk across the yard, apparently, indifferent to his own danger, and stoop down and pick up tenderly an unfledged sparrow that had just fallen from its nest, carefully placing it upon a limb of the tree overhead. One night some soldiers were overheard discussing the doctrine of evolution around the camp-fire when a rough, honest fellow cut short the argument by saying, with great earnestness: "Well, boys, the rest of us may have developed from monkeys, but I tell you only God Almighty could have made such a man as Marse Robert." (886)

Good Investment.

Mr. Andrew Carnegie, when a boy, was invited with other working boys to spend his Saturday evenings in the private library of a rich man. They were even allowed to take books home with them. Realizing the good work this man was doing, young Carnegie resolved that if ever he were able he would establish free libraries for working people. This resolve he has carried out in three cities and towns of Pennsylvania, one in Iowa, and nine in his native Scotland; and he now offers to give one to Washington. "And if I live," he adds, "there will be more." Such royal gifts are not within the power of many; but who has not a few books which might light the fires of aspiration in some impoverished young life? (887)

Bonar's Vision.

This is old but good. Horatius Bonar, the author of "What a Friend We Have In Jesus," and other hymns, sat in his study early in the week. He was doing what most preachers are ever engaged at: preparing for next Sabbath. Seated in the easy chair musing over his theme, he must have fallen into a doze. He heard the door creak on the hinge and looking up beheld a strange personage enter the room. The being, certainly not of this world, stepped quickly to the little stand in the room, and giving its occupant just a passing glance, proceeded to unpack an alchemist's kit, which it bore upon its back. A mortar and pestle, several vials, some chemicals in powder, a pair of balances and other things were set out in order. Then the creature stepped before the astonished pastor and, without ceremony, said: "Are you a candidate for glory?" "I humbly consider that I am." "Then give me thine heart." And in relating the vision Bonar afterwards said that it seemed to him that there went out of his side literally his very heart. The strange visitor took it and placing it in the stone mortar ground it into powder. Then submitting it to one test and another he made various observations and noted his findings on a card. When he had completed his work he silently repacked his kit and placing it in position stepped over to his confounded host and passed him the card with no comment. When he had composed himself Bonar turned to the card and read:

"The Analysis of the Heart of a Candidate for Glory."

Mass	100 parts.
Personal ambition	27 parts
Bigotry	19 parts.
Love of authority	14 parts.
Pride of denomination	16 parts.
Love of praise	17 parts.
Love to God (pure)	3 parts.
Love to man (pure)	4 parts.
	100 parts.

Bonar always insisted that the incident was not a dream, and the vision largely shaped his ministry and devotion therafter. As of old the analysis needs no comment, but is full of heart-searching suggestion.—Wm. H. Stanley. (888)

Honor the Father.

"My father was a wagon-maker," said President Steyn, of the Orange Free State, recently, "and I am thankful to think he was a good one." Even to the occupant of a chair of state the fifth commandment adds a comely crown.—Youth's Companion.

The Germ of a College Revival.

When Rev. A. C. Dixon, now a leading Baptist divine, was a raw young preacher he became pastor of a church at Chapel Hill, the seat of the University of North Carolina. He tells, in the Christian Endeavor World, how the first revival among the college boys had its beginning. He says:

"One morning I arose after a restless night determined to spend the day in fasting and prayer. I took my Bible and went into the grove, and, sitting on an old gray rock, read the promises and poured out my soul before God. When I returned to my room I had a quiet assurance that the prayer was answered, and that at the meeting that night some of the boys would be saved.

"I went to the church without elaborate preparation, read a chapter, and urged upon all the importance of immediate decision. When the invitation was given the students came forward and filled the front pews, earnestly but calmly requesting Christians to pray for them."

It was the beginning of a revival in which a hundred students were converted. (889)

Dry Rot.

Lord Shaftesbury was a follower of Ezra when he opened the great theaters of London for Bible preaching and song, so that the poor might come in to a simple religious service which they could understand. His memorable words were, "The Church which does not lead in evangelism will die of dry rot, if not by divine judgment." (890)

Victoria's Reply.

An African prince who was sent on an embassy with costly presents for Queen Victoria, from an Ethiopian court, preferred a modest

request that England's beloved sovereign would tell him the secret of England's greatness and glory. Her majesty did not, like Hezekiah, show the embassador her diamonds and her precious jewels and her rich ornaments, but, handing him a beautifully bound copy of the Bible, said, "Tell the prince that this is the secret of England's greatness." (891)

The Happiest Time is to Come.

The pastor of one church in Brooklyn for fifty-three years, Dr. Richard S. Storrs, speaks this cheering word of testimony:

"I had as happy a childhood as falls to the lot of most children; and many a time it has been said to me by those who were visiting at my father's house, this is the happiest time in life for you. I did not believe it then; I did not believe it as I grew older, and I know now that it was not true.

"That happiest time in your life is to come hereafter. If you try to do that which is right and useful to others, that which is honorable to yourself, and that which is for the glory and praise of God, every year of your life will be happier than that which went before it.

"So do not feel that you are entering an oppressive, grinding, hateful world. Life on earth grows better and sweeter as one grows on in it, and what you are to do is to try to make a success of that life—each one of you." (892)

Graves of the Rich.

The multi-millionaire of to-day is no longer content to possess a collection of masterpieces of art, a string of the best blooded horses in a palatial stable, a library of volumes worth their weight in gold—he must also possess a mausolem, a tomb wherein he and his family for generations to come shall pass their long sleep. More than one hundred of these last palaces of the rich may be seen in the great cities of the dead that surround New York. C. P. Huntington and Charles T. Yerkes, each drive to the cemetery, regularly, to visit the beautiful pile of marble to which they shall at last surrender. The magnificent mausolem at New Dorp, Staten Island, was the outcome in his lifetime of the genius of William H. Vanderbilt. Pursuant to his instructions, it was built without any fancy work, but at the same time on such a grand and substantial scale that it is said there is nothing among the tombs of either European or oriental royalty to excell it in solidity of structure and gradeur of design. It is forty feet in height, sixty in breadth, and about one hundred and fifty in depth, and contains places for two hundred sleepers. It is situated on an eminence commanding the largest prospect of New York bay, and one of the finest views, all around, in the state of New York. The tomb and the twenty-one acres of land, upon the highest part of which it stands, cost nearly half a million dollars; and when the grounds are finished in the style intended, beautiful roads and walks made, flower gardens planted with the requisite adornments, the entire expense of the mausolem and its surroundings will not fall short of a million dollars. The precautions taken by the family against grave-robbers is one of the best that has ever been adopted. There is a guard at the tomb night and day. Each of these must put on record his vigilance every fifteen minutes by winding up a clock, which is sent to the office at the Grand Central Depot every morning.—All graves will give up their occupants some day, and all, rich or poor, shall come to judgment. (893)

STATISTICAL FACTS AND POINTS.

Twentieth Century City.

The following statistics are from Josiah Strong's "Twentieth Century City," published by the Baker & Taylor Co., New York. In the chapter on "A Nation of Cities," he says: "In 1840, 21.79 per cent of our population were engaged in agriculture; in 1870 the proportion had fallen to 15.43 per cent; in 1880 it was 15.38 per cent, and in 1890 only 13.68 per cent. On the other hand 4.12 per cent of the population were employed in manufactures in 1850; 5.32 per cent in 1870, and 7.52 per cent in 1890. By the close of the century the proportion engaged in manufactures will be twice as large as it was fifty years before." (894)

In the chapter on "The city a menace to itself," he says: "The church, like the home, grows relatively weaker as the city grows larger. In 1840 there was in Boston one Protestant church to every 1,228 souls; in 1890 one to every 2,581. In New York in 1840 there was one Protestant church to every 1,992 souls; in 1890 one to every 4,361. Investigations show that our larger cities, generally, in 1890 had only half as many Protestant churches to the population as they had fifty years before."

In 1890 of the male population in our eighteen largest cities, 1,028,122 were native born of native parentage, 1,386,776 were foreign born, and 1,450,733 were native born of foreign parentage; that is, those who were foreign by birth or parentage numbered 2,837,509, or more than two and a half times as many as the native American stock. (895)

Cigarettes.

At the recent National Conference of Charities and Corrections in Cincinnati, an address was made by George Torrence, of Pontiac, Ill., superintendent of the State Reformatory, on "The Relation of the Cigarette to Crime." After reciting his own experience with boys coming to his institution, Mr. Torrence said: "I am sure cigarettes are destroying and making criminals of more of them than the saloons." In his reformatory there are 218 boys. Of 63, averaging 12 years of age, 58 were cigarette smokers. Of 133, averaging 14 years of age, 125 were cigarette smokers. Of 82, averaging 15 years, 73 were cigarette smokers. This demostrates that 92 per cent of the whole number were cigarette fiends at the time of committing crimes for which they were committed to the reformatory. The general discussion developed a similar experience with others connected with reformatories of boys. (896)

ANECDOTES BY D. L. MOODY.

(Note.—Through the courtesey of the Colportage Association, Chicago, we are enabled to give the following copyrighted illustrations by D. L. Moody to the readers of Current Anecdotes.)

Not at all Absurd.

A man said to me some time ago, "Moody, the doctrine you preach is most absurd: you preach that men have only to believe to change the whole course of their life. A man will not change his course by simply believing."

I said—"I think I can make you believe that in less than two minutes."

"No, you can't," he said; "I'll never believe it."

I said, "Let us make sure that we understand each other. You say a man is not affected by what he believes, that it will not change the course of his actions?"

"I do."

"Supposing," I said, "a man should put his head in at that door and say the house was on fire, what would you do? You would get out by the window if you believed it, wouldn't you?"

"Oh, he replied, 'I didn't think of that!"

"No," I said, "I guess you didn't."

Belief is the foundation of all society, of commerce, and of everything else. (897)

Mind Your Own Busiuess.

One night in Chicago, many years ago, when I was on my way home I saw a man leaning against a lamp-post. Stepping up to him and placing my hand on his shoulder, I said:

"Are you a Christian?"

The man flew into a rage, doubled up his fist and I thought he was going to pitch me into the gutter.

I said: "I'm very sorry if I've offended you, but I thought I was asking a proper question."

"Mind your own business," he roared.

"That is my business," I answered.

About three months later, on a bitter cold morning about daybreak, some one knocked at my door.

"Who's there!" I asked.

A stranger answered, and I said: "What do you want?"

"I want to become a Christian," was the reply.

I opened the door, and to my astonishment there was the man who had cursed me for talking to him as he leaned against the lamp-post.

He said: "I'm very sorry. I haven't had any peace since that night. Your words have haunted and troubled me. I couldn't sleep last night, and I thought I'd come and get you to pray for me." (898)

Getting Too Personal

My wife was once teaching my little boy a Sabbath-school lesson; she was telling him to notice how sin grows till it becomes a habit. The little fellow thought it was coming too close to him, so he colored up, and finally said:

"Mamma, I think you are getting a good way from the subject." (899)

A Well-deserved Rebuff.

When I first held meetings in Glasgow, my committee (without my knowledge) sent to a livery establishment that kept a thousand horses, to engage a cab to drive me to my meetings on Sunday. The proprietor was a godly man, and sent me this message:

"Tell Mr. Moody he will do as much good by walking to his meetings as by driving three or four miles through the Fourth Commandment." (900)

What Could the King Do?

In the second century they brought a Christian before a king, who wanted him to recant and give up Christ and Christianity, but the man spurned the proposition. But the king said:

"If you don't do it, I will banish you."

The man smiled and answered, "You can't banish me from Christ, for He says He will never leave me nor forsake me."

The king got angry, and said: "Well, I will confiscate your property and take it all from you."

And the man replied: "My treasures are laid up on high; you cannot get them."

The king became still more angry, and said: "I will kill you."

"Why," the man answered, "I have been dead forty years; I have been dead with Christ, dead to the world, and my life is hid with Christ and God, and you cannot touch it."

"What are you going to do with such a fanatic?" said the king. (901)

Looking Downward.

I heard of a man once who dreamed that he was swept into heaven, and oh, he was so delighted to think that he had at last got there. All at once one came and said:

"Come, I want to show you something."

He took him to the battlements, and he said, "Look down yonder; what do you see?"

"I see a very dark world."

"Look and see if you know it."

"Why, yes," he said, "that is the world I have come from."

"What do you see?"

"Men are blindfolded there; many of them are going over a precipice."

"Well, will you stay here and enjoy heaven, or will you go back to earth and spend a little longer time, and tell those men about this world?"

He was a Christian worker who had been discouraged. He awoke from his sleep and said:

"I have never wished myself dead since." (902)

This Volume Will Come from the Press January 15, 1900.

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AND

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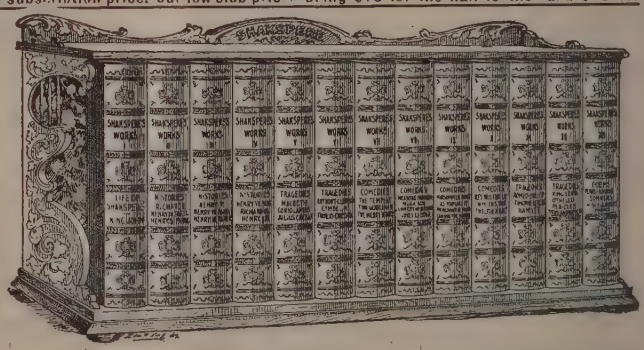

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THE RETURN TO THE GOSPEL.

By Rev. John Watson D. D. (Ian Maclaren).

[Editors Note—In place of quotations from some popular novel this month, we present through the kindness of the British Weekly an address recently delivered at Aberdeen University. While it is not exactly in the province of Current Anecdotes, we are certain that our readers will thank us for making this exception.]

THE CHANGE IN PREACHING.

Within our generation a change has come over the spirit of preaching which the average hearer may not have been able to define, but which he has distinctly recognized. It will be allowed on every hand that the modern preacher is at least as well educated and as intelligent as his predecessor. It would be unfair to suggest that he is one bit less sincere and earnest. There are grounds on which it might be urged, and proved, that he is really more in touch with life, and more sympathetic in dealing with his fellow-men. Never has preaching shown such an intimate acquaintance with literature, or such a sensitive appreciation of social movements. The sermons of our day are distinguished for the most part by their excellent style of speech, their unfailing freshness of thought, their hopeful breadth of vision, and also by a certain sweet reasonableness of tone, which is most attractive and persuasive. If any one compare the sermon at the close of the century with the sermon at the middle of the century, he will discover that by the standard of art the sermon of to-day shows an immense advance, both in conception and in execution. If one excepts certain splendid masterpieces, even the great preachers of bygone days appear to us rambling and tedious, with a perfect mania for pragmatical distinction and sustained commonplace. Let anyone recall the preacher of his boyhood and the preacher of his manhood, and even after he has made allowance for the distressing fact that the natural boy does not hanker after sermons, it still remains that the preacher of yesterday was apt to be wearisome, and that the preacher of to-day, above all things, is interesting. It goes, of course, without saying that out of such a large body of men there must be a certain proportion of dullards, and a smaller proportion—growing smaller every year under the pressure of circumstances—of sluggards, but it may be fairly contended that the intellectual and literary excellence of the pulpit product to-day is the highest in the whole history of preaching.

Ought it not therefore to follow that the hold of preaching upon the people should to-day be more imperious than ever, and that notwithstanding the rivalry of the press, preaching which has at last become a fine art should also be an irresistible force. It is however, very disheartening to discover that thoughtful people to whom the modern sermon, which is saturated with humanism and is ready at every turn to make a nervous compromise between faith and unbelief, absent themselves from church in increasing numbers, and are not present to hear what was prepared with immense pain, and perhaps, too, many sacrifices of faith, for their acceptance. It is also discouraging to find that the proletariat at the other extreme of society, who do not spend overmuch time in reading or in solving problems, have not been fetched by the clever illustrations and sensational subjects of the other kind of modern who address them, but also very largely remain at home. The average preacher of to-day is a better workman than his father, but fewer people come to hear him preach, and he has less power over those who come.

THE SOUND OF THE GOSPEL MISSING.

Very much has been gained, and for the advance we ought to be thankful; there has indeed been only one loss, but we are beginning to find that it has been very serious. One misses certain notes of the former preaching which were very impressive, and whose echoes still fall upon our ears with grave, sweet melody, such as the profound sense of spiritual reality, and affectionate urgency in exhorting men to flee from hell and to lay hold on heaven; an unaffected interest in human souls, and an intense devotion to Jesus Christ. Pious preachers of the past, even when destitute of genius and learning, carried themselves in the pulpit with a certain grave authority which sat well upon them and did not offend their hearers. As barristers, they were not so adroit; as ambassadors, they were mighty. To-day preaching is more intellectual and practical. In the former time it was more spiritual and evangelical. What we miss with unexpressed regret is the ancient and winsome sound of the Everlasting Gospel.

Two influences more than all others have dulled their voice, and let us say at once both were inevitable, because they were born of the time-spirit, which bloweth where it listeth, and in the end fulfils the will of God. One remembers that almost from the beginning of Christian thought there have been three tendencies which have had their period of influence in turn, but none of which is ever wholly dead: The ecclesiastical, which thinks most of the Church of which Cyprian, and the Jesuits, and Archbishop Laud, and Cardinal Manning have been the apostles; the critical, which is concerned chiefly with the idea which is associated with the names of Origen and Erasmus and the Cambridge Platonists and Dean Stanley; and the evangelical, which lays its stress upon the value of the soul, whose succession, although of course with personal differences, has run from Augustine to Luther, from Luther to Bunyan, from Bunyan to Wesley. There have been periods when one school has been in the ascendant and the other two in the shadow, and periods when two of the three schools have flourished side by side, and the third seemed for the moment to be dead. It is likely, however, that these three trends of thought are permanent, and will ever contribute their share to Christian theology and life, and none has such a power of resurrection, or is so omnipotent when it awakes from sleep, as the spirit of the evangel.

THE INFLUENCE OF CRITICISM.

We have seen it of recent days suffer at the hands of both its rivals. Criticism, which has

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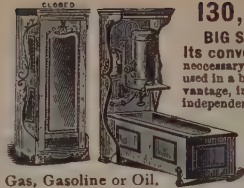

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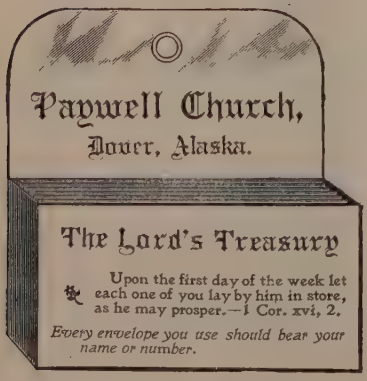
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played with lambent light round the origin of pagan literature, and has astonished the reading world with its brilliant results, came at last, as it was bound to do, to the study of that Book beside which all others are as nothing, and whatever he may have thought in his haste, criticism has deserved the gratitude of every believer. The Bible has been edited with footnotes, and clear light has been thrown on its construction. Each volume has been set in its historical circumstances, its author has become a living person, the history of the period has been re-created, and the human life of long ago has appeared in fresh colors. As the Bible comes from the hands of the critics of the believing school, it is a richer book for the Christian because, while its soul has been left untouched, its form has been illuminated. The Church owes an enormous debt to the critics who have served their brethren, not only at the cost of time and toil, but with the still greater sacrifices of peace and of reputation. One ought also thankfully to acknowledge that scholars of the first order have united the most unflinching pursuit of truth with the most passionate faith in Christ; but one must face the fact that criticism is not a congenial atmosphere for the Gospel. Criticism demands a judicial attitude and a detached mind; the Gospel positive belief and a fiery enthusiasm. The critic is an analyst with a pair of scales; the evangelist is a missionary with a cross. Questions of text have their interest to the scholar, but there is the danger that if a man's mind be too much engrossed with the latter, he may miss that spiritual voice which is to the words of the Bible what the sound of the organ is to the pipes, and there is a vast difference between an organ-builder and an organist. The temperature of criticism is also sometimes very low, almost reaching to freezing point, and it is difficult to live in such an environment without getting chilled to the heart. When the preacher gives himself to the authorship of a prophecy with keen zest, he is less likely to be in a good temper for enforcing the prophet's message, and if he busies himself overmuch with the origins of the Gospel, he will have the less glow in proclaiming the living invitations of Jesus. So that it may be laid down as a law—with brilliant exceptions, which we carry in a grateful memory—when a man begins to criticise, he ceases to evangelize.

THE HIGH CHURCH IDEA.

More than fifty years ago the other school, which has been long without influence and had almost forgotten its own traditions, came to life under the leadership of Pusey and Newman, and a new sense of the grandeur of the Church took hold of English-speaking Christendom. No one can say that the revival of the High Church idea was not needed, or that it has done no good. The imagination must be dead indeed which is not impressed by the Body of Christ, with its inspiring worship, its succession of saints, its shelter for the lonely, its witness to the Unseen. The church idea has redressed the extreme of bare individualism, and has presented a centre of unity amid the divisions of humanity. It has beautified the whole circumstances of worship, sustained the spirit of reverence in an irreverent age, and invested religion with the charm of spiritual romance. Unfortunately behind the Church has lurked that ill-omened power which ever flings its shadow over political and religious liberty. The official priest, with his material doctrine of the Sacrament, his insistence on dogmas as a condition of salvation, his interference between God and the soul, and his insolent private tyrannies, is the natural foe of the Gospel. It was so in the mystics, and at the Reformation; it is so now, and it will be so in days to come. The priest and the evangelist cannot agree.

It may, however, be predicted with some reason that we are on the threshold of an evangelical revival, not only because in the course of events it is now due, but because of its two rivals—one has nearly finished its work, and the other has grown intolerable. Criticism has lost the enthusiasm of youth and is reaching the repose of middle age; her wiser students are growing cautious and are less daring in their theories. The time for distant voyages of exploration is over, and the season for surveying the newly-discovered coasts has come. It is not likely that the study of either Testament will result in any find so brilliant as to dazzle the Church's imagination or so startling as to shake her faith. Before the scholarship of believing men now lies the sober task of correcting rash speculations, clearing up details, working upon the text of Scripture, assimilating information from ancient remains, and classifying results. This is a service of immense value, but it is hardly one to absorb the energy of the Church or to intoxicate her preachers. All signs go to show that the Church is sick of what is negative, and hungers for what is positive. Upon her mind are lying the burden of human misery, the divisions of society, and the despair of the poor. For those problems she desires the solution, and for those people she desires the message, and there has never been any other than the Gospel. No one can say that sacerdotalism has lost its power, but with recent events in one's mind, it may be safely said that it has passed its zenith. With extraordinary audacity a party in England has been denouncing the Reformation, restoring Roman practices in religion, asserting the authority of the priesthood, unchurching nonconforming Christians, and striving to effect a union between the Anglican Church and the Roman See. It was declared in public prints that this party ruled the Church of England and its wildest vagaries met for awhile with little resistance. But it has at last exhausted the patience of the nation, and even of the bishops, the most timid of rulers, and received a serious warning. The intelligent Englishman of to-day may not share the fierce prejudice of his fathers against the members of the Roman Cmmunion, he may appreciate to the full the majestic unity of Rome, the beauty of her saintly type and her services in the propagation of the faith. But he knows very well that the power of Rome means the subjugation of national independence, the interference with family sanctity, the denial of individual liberty, and a steady opposition to every form of light. Whenever the

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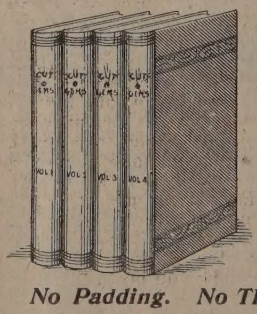

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question is seriously raised, whether this land, whose freedom was bought with a great price, is again to be sold into bondage, then England will have her answer ready, and Scotland still readier, and it will be the same that our fathers gave at the Reformation. Between the Gospel and Rome there has been an ancient feud, and the Gospel will carry the day.

The future lies between the freedom of the Gospel and the bondage of priesthood, for in the realm of faith, whatever may be said of learning, there will be no third party worth mentioning. Within our memory there was a school of liberal thought which rendered great service to theology, and which once seemed likely to be a permanent force in English religion. But the Broad Church as a visible party has disappeared; it has neither leaders nor disciples, it has neither voice nor votes; its wrecks are on every shore. What reason can be given for this disappointment of bright hopes? Certainly not the men themselves; for if ever teachers might have been the beginning of a time, they were Maurice, Robertson and Kingsley. Certainly not the substance of their teaching, for nothing could be more human, more heartening, more Christian. The cause of their failure to make disciples among the people, to perpetuate their influence, to be a bulwark against priestly arrogance, was their neglect to systematise. Even the most sublime and reasonable doctrines will not be held long unless they are built up into unity. An army will always route a mob, and an organized system will always be conqueror over a handful of beautiful ideas. There are only two complete interpretations of Christianity. One is the evangelical, with its doctrines of conversion, its con ition of personal faith, its direct intercourse with Christ, its right of private judgment, its absolute liberty of conscience. The other is the sacredotal, with its baptismal regeneration, its mediating priest, its material sacraments, its assertion of church authority. Each set of doctrines hangs together, each has served some interest of truth, each is unanswerable, if certain points be once allowed, and each is teachable to the most simple person. Their teachableness gives to these systems their practical and popular hold, and they bid against one another for the people's heart.

THE GOSPEL RE-THRONED.

For awhile the Gospel has gone into exile and ceased to have its ancient power. It is coming back again to the throne, and the day of its tribulation will not have been lost when we welcome before we die, and our children after us, a still more generous and more convincing Gospel. It will have thrown off in its adversity many false friends in the shape of prejudice and bigotry, which did the Gospel injury in the days of its prosperity. It will have gained a wider vision and a more gracious charity in those days of foreign travel. When the Gospel once more reigns from the pulpit it will be less scholastic on doctrine, and more evangelistic in spirit. It will be enshrined in a more beautiful worship and will have at its service a more varied culture. It will be free from certain offences and limitations which once hindered its appeal; it will declare a more gracious God, a more human Christ, a more hopeful message. There is no man who ought not to pray and hope for its new advent, since it will mean the rebirth and and renewal of faith. Preachers will again stand in the pulpit as the messengers of God, rebuking men boldly for their sins in the name of the eternal, and assuring the penitent of the Divine Mercy, declaring with confidence that Christ has finished the work of salvation, and offering that salvation without money and without price unto all who believe. That will be a sure word for the minister to carry to the guilty sinner whose conscience cries aloud in its agony, and a comfortable word for the dying, when they are face to face with eternity. There will be a revival of religion throughout the land which never has come and never can come, save by the preaching of the Gospel, which will strengthen the Church throughout all her borders, and revive every missionary and charitable cause in our land. What can never be done by learning or by ritual shall be accomplished before our eyes, when the voice of the Gospel is once more heard in its clearness and its fullness, throughout the land which it blessed in the past and again will bless. We are in the valley now where the shadows lie heavy, but already the East is redening, and we shall live to see the feet of God's messengers, beautiful upon the mountains, because they are bringing good tidings of good, because they are publishing Salvation.

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